

Message Text

SECRET

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44

ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9897

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

S E C R E T RABAT 5219

EXDIS

FOR NEA ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MO OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE SEC VISIT

1. ON RETURNING TO OUR POSTS AFTER OUR MADRID TALKS, DICK PARKER AND I BOTH LEARNED INFORMALLY THAT THE SECRETARY MAY HAVE BEEN CONSIDERING IN HIS EARLY PLANNING FOR HIS LAST EUROPEAN OR AFRICAN TRIP A BRIEF STOP IN RABAT.

2. ON THE QUESTION OF THE SECRETARY'S FOLLOWING THROUGH ON HIS DESIRE, EXPRESSED TO HASSAN'S SPECIAL EMISSARY KARIM-LAMRANI LAST FEBRUARY, TO MEET WITH HASSAN WHOM HE HAS NOT SEEN SINCE OCTOBER 1974, YOU AND THE SECRETARY BOTH ASKED ME ON MY LAST CONSULTATION WHETHER THE SECRETARY COULD STOP IN RABAT WITHOUT STOPPING IN ALGIERS, AND WHAT EFFECT SUCH A MOVE WOULD HAVE ON OUR RELATIONS WITH ALGERIA. DICK PARKER AND I DISCUSSED THESE QUESTIONS AT MADRID AND WE HAVE EXCHANGED MESSAGES SUBSEQUENTLY. (A) HE FEELS A VISIT TO ALGERIA BY THE SECRETARY WOULD GIVE A USEFUL BOOST TO OUR RELATIONS WITH THAT COUNTRY. BOUMEDIENE HAS NOT HEARD FROM SECRETARY IN LONG TIME AND NEEDS TO BE REASSURED THEY ARE STILL FRIENDS. HE WOULD BE LIKELY TO LECTURE THE SECRETARY ON THE SAHARA, AND VISITS TO BOTH ALGERIA AND RABAT WOULD STIMULATE SPECULATION WE WERE ENGAGED IN A MEDIATION, BUT DICK FEELS THE FIRST IS ONE OF THE OCCUPATIONAL RISKS OF

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DIPLOMACY AND WE BOTH CONSIDER THAT SPECULATION ON MEDIATION

COULD BE NIPPED IN THE BUD WITH ONE OR MORE TIMELY PRESS BRIEFINGS. HE FEELS IT WOULD NOT BE A BAD THING IF PEOPLE THOUGHT WE WERE TAKING A MORE ACTIVE POLITICAL ROLE IN NORTH AFRICA. I AM NOT PERSUADED ON THIS POINT. SUCH A MOVE COULD SHIFT THE SAHARA ISSUE FROM AN ESSENTIALLY ARAB/AFRICAN REGIONAL CONTEXT TO A LARGER, AND I BELIEVE UNDESIRABLE, FRAMEWORK INVOLVING THE SUPERPOWERS. (B) HE BELIEVES A VISIT TO RABAT ALONE WOULD BE RESENTED BUT WOULD ALSO BE MANAGEABLE. IT WOULD TEND TO CONFIRM BOUMEDIENE'S SUSPICIONS ABOUT OUR INTENTIONS TOWARDS HIM AND WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY PROVOKE SOUR COMMENTS ABOUT OUR PARTIALITY TOWARDS MOROCCO, BUT IT WOULD NOT AFFECT OUR ECONOMIC RELATIONS AND THE POLITICAL DAMAGE COULD BE CONTROLLED, PARTICULARLY IF SECRETARY SENT REASSURING MESSAGE TO BOUMEDIENE, IN ADVANCE IF POSSIBLE, SAYING HE HOPED TO VISIT HIM TOO AS SOON AS CIRCUMSTANCES PERMIT AND SAYING SOMETHING SUBSTANTIVE ABOUT CURRENT CONCERNS (AFRICA, MIDDLE EAST AND CIEC). (IN FACT, DICK WOULD LIKE SUCH A MESSAGE IN ANY EVENT, I.E., WHETHER OR NOT THE SECRETARY VISITS RABAT.) THIS WOULD ASSUAGE LOCAL SUSPICIONS SOMEWHAT. (C) THE SHORT ANSWER THEREFORE IS, YES, THE SECRETARY CAN VISIT RABAT WITHOUT VISITING ALGIERS.

3. AS FOR THE SUBSTANCE OF A BRIEF VISIT BY THE SECRETARY TO KING HASSAN, MY MAJOR CONCERN IS TO HAVE THE SECRETARY MAKE THE INITIAL APPROACH TO HASSAN ON THE PHASEDOWN OF OUR NAVAL FACILITIES COUPLED WITH THE REQUEST FOR SUCH OTHER LIMITED DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS AS MAY BE RECOMMENDED BY THE OAKLEY-CHAIRMAN WORKING GROUP AND APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY AND CLEMENTS IN DOD. IN REVIEWING THE HISTORY OF OUR WITHDRAWALS FROM BASES IN MOROCCO AND THE ARRANGEMENTS MADE IN 1963 FOR OUR CONTINUED NAVAL COMMUNICATIONS PRESENCE WHERE ALL NEGOTIATIONS BEGAN AT THE CHIEF OF STATE LEVEL, IT IS VERY CLEAR TO ME THAT THE INITIAL APPROACH SHOULD BE MADE BY THE SECRETARY BECAUSE OF HASSAN'S HIGH REGARD FOR HIM; BECAUSE IT WILL SHOW THE KING THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO A CONTINUING, ALBEIT LIMITED, DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM; AND FINALLY BECAUSE AN APPROACH FROM THE SECRETARY WOULD HAVE MORE CHANCE OF A POSITIVE RESPONSE. THE DEPARTMENT AND I COULD THEN FOLLOW UP ON THE DETAILS. THE TIMETABLE FOR INFORMING THE KING IS SLIPPING, AND THERE IS
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NOTHING LIKE A VISIT TO SPEED UP RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE BUREAUCRACY SO OUR LEADERS CAN MAKE THE DECISIONS*

4. DICK PARKER AND I CONCERTED ON THIS TELEGRAM AND HE FULLY CONCURS WITH FOREGOING TEXT.
ANDERSON

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NNN

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